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been engaged in studies which at first sight seem to strengthen the impression that the central action of procaine may account for some of its dramatic therapeutic effects. With the simple empirical idea that a drug known to be potent in relief of ventricular fibrillation might have some ameliorating effect in cases of cerebral dysrhythmia, the authors administered intravenous procaine to a series of patients known to have more or less severe cerebral dysrhythmia. These patients suffered from a rather wide variety of acute and chronic nervous diseases, and the only common denominator was cerebral dysrhythmia. Not only did the dysrhythmia show dramatic improvement coincident with the administration of procaine hydrochloride, but simultaneously the subjective and objective symptoms, both neurologic and psychologic, likewise responded in a very encouraging way.

Neither vasodilatation of the cerebral vessels nor general stimulation of sympathetic nerve endings has so far been demonstrated to exert such effects on the function of the central nervous system as we have observed with procaine.

Probably some of the central effects of procaine can be obtained with local infiltration. This is, of course, generally admitted when untoward results occur, but it should also be considered in connection with the favorable

effects. Macpherson recently expressed the idea that in some cases we are getting the beneficial effects of procaine injection through central action even though the injection is purposely given at or near the site of the pain.

It is interesting to recall that when morphine was introduced into medical practice it was considered advisable to inject it into the site of the pain which required treatment. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, in its eleventh edition (1911), represents this concept pretty well when it states that ordinary hypodermic injection of morphine is indicated for internal or otherwise inaccessible pains, but for sciatica, injection into the affected muscle is recommended.

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(For additional information and references, see articles by Leffingwell, F., and Moor, F. B., in this issue of MEDICAL ARTS AND SCIENCES.)

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